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TAGS: [IZ](#) [KE](#) [PREL](#)
SUBJECT: SENATOR FEINGOLD QUERIES THE GOK ON IRAQ

Classified By: PolCouns Andre for reasons 1.4 B & D.

¶1. (C) Summary: Senator Feingold sought views on Iraq from President Kibaki, Foreign Minister Tuju and Trade Minister Kituyi. Kibaki was strongly supportive of the USG's efforts in Iraq and counseled steadfastness. His Foreign and Trade ministers, however, were highly critical of the USG's actions in Iraq, but did not offer a policy prescription. The GoK is often equally incoherent on domestic political and other foreign policy issues. End Summary.

Kibaki: Don't Abandon Iraq

¶2. (C) President Mwai Kibaki answered Senator Feingold by stating his conviction that the USG "must not abandon Iraq and simply go out." He asked, "Who do you leave behind? What changes (in the region) will you have achieved?" He warned that a premature departure "will lead to a bigger and wider conflict in the region." It is better, he insisted, to continue the struggle. He continued, "It is fashionable to be hostile to America and say that you should not be there. Personally, I do not support that. You cannot withdraw just like that. You must support those who want to move Iraq in the right direction. I am quite sure it is better that way."

Tuju & Kituyi: Critical of U.S. Intervention, but No Suggestions for Next Steps

¶3. (C) Foreign Minister Rafael Tuju and Trade Minister Mukhisa Kituyi responded to the senator's question in terms very different from that of their boss. Kituyi stated, "The average informed Kenyan views the U.S. intervention as arrogant, unreasoned and built on false pretenses. It is against the interest of the War on Terrorism. We are partners in that war, but the Iraq war has made us less secure. We see a potential link between Iraq and Somalia. We fear that jihadis will migrate to Somalia as the next field of battle. Also, we see Iraq as having sucked resources and attention away from real threats."

¶4. (C) Tuju commented, "The U.S. had the right intentions, but made too many mistakes. We disagree with your method of dealing with problems. These methods reflect faulty, shallow intelligence. This same tendency affects our relations. Based on bad intelligence, the Ambassador is told wrong things about us by badly informed staff who are ignorant of local dynamics. (Comment: We beg to differ. End Comment.) In Iraq, the U.S. did not anticipate what

would happen between the Sunni and Shi'a communities, or how neighboring countries would react (to the intervention). No one appreciated the consequences. You need a better perspective on issues. For example, you have simplistic assumptions about the utility of grafting democracy on societies with no infrastructure for democracy. This simply doesn't work." Senator Feingold asked Tuju about his view of "a timeline for redeployment of U.S. forces from Iraq." Tuju responded, "I do not have enough information to hazard a suggested approach, but your decision must be well informed by reliable intelligence and reason, not just politics." Tuju suggested that Iran is the key to a USG exit strategy, "You should have encouraged rapprochement with Iran long ago. Positive engagement with Iran is needed, not threats. They will never respond to threats."

Comment: Typical Incoherence

15. (C) In dramatic contrast to his predecessor, Kibaki is known for delegating a great deal of latitude and authority to his ministers. He does not enforce unified policy positions even on key domestic political issues. It is not surprising that the GoK at senior levels has varied views on Iraq.

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